

# **OKLAHOMA CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT**



**Standard Operating Procedures  
BILINGUAL UNIT**

**1<sup>st</sup> Edition**

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**100.00 STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

The Oklahoma City Bilingual Unit was formed in order to assist the Department to perform its mission and deliver its services in situations where languages other than spoken English are used.

The Bilingual Unit performs this function by providing trained interpreters and translators, by maintaining contacts and relationships with communities and individuals who speak languages other than spoken English, and by performing linguistic and cultural training.

**200.00 ORGANIZATION AND STAFFING**

The Department's organizational structure is depicted on an organizational chart that is reviewed, updated and distributed as a Special Order to all personnel as needed. The organizational chart depicts the formal lines of authority and communication within the Department. The Oklahoma City Police Department Bilingual Unit falls under the chain-of-command within the Investigations Bureau. All Bilingual Unit members, with the exception of the full-time Bilingual Unit Coordinator, have primary assignments. Membership in the Bilingual Unit is voluntary, and considered a secondary assignment. Bilingual Unit members can come from any bureau within the police department.

**300.00 UTILIZATION AND DEPLOYMENT**

**310.00 UTILIZATION**

The Bilingual Unit will be utilized in a variety of means.

1. Immediate call for interpreting assistance. Any police department employee may request assistance from any Bilingual Unit member to interpret or assist. These requests may be made informally or formally through the Unit chain of command.
2. Scheduled appointment for interpreting assistance. Any police department employee may request, in advance, assistance from the Bilingual Unit to help with a future interpreting appointment. These requests should be made formally through the full-time Bilingual Officer during normal business hours, or through the Bilingual Unit chain of command after business hours.
3. Request for participation in a community event. Any police department employee may request in advance, assistance from the Bilingual Unit to assist with a community event activity. These requests should be made formally

through the Bilingual Unit chain of command.

4. Request for translation (written language) assistance. Translations, which refer to written language instead of spoken language, are generally performed by experts outside of the department. Any police employee who wishes to have a document translated should submit that request to the Bilingual Unit Supervisor.
5. Request for linguistic or cultural training. The Bilingual Unit is available to provide language training and cultural training to both Department employees and to citizens, whenever it is in the best interest of the Department. Requests for training should be submitted to the Bilingual Unit Supervisor.

## 320.0      DEPLOYMENT

Any on-duty Bilingual Unit member may self-dispatch to an interpreting need or request as long as his/her response is in line with their work unit's SOP and his/her chain of command has been informed of the assignment.

In addition, requests for assistance can be made directly to the Bilingual Unit, through the Communications Unit, or to the Bilingual Unit Supervisor.

Once deployed, the Bilingual Unit member shall evaluate the request and determine if it is within his/her scope of expertise. The member shall then make the decision to:

1. Perform the assignment;
2. Request assistance from a more skilled member of the unit;
3. Refer the assignment to the Bilingual Unit Supervisor for reassignment.
4. As a general rule, only Bilingual Unit members with the tested Skill Level of 8 and above should conduct formal suspect interviews in any "Persons Crimes" when available.
  - a. When a Bilingual Unit member with the Skill Level of 8 or above is not available for a suspect interview in a "Persons Crime", a Bilingual Unit member of lesser Skill Level may proceed with the interview if he/she feels they have the skills necessary to complete the task and the assigned investigator agrees to proceed. Any supplemental reports and recordings of the interview will be forwarded to the Bilingual Unit Supervisor for review. When possible, field interviews should be audio recorded. Once received,

the interview will be reviewed for accuracy in a timely manner as to not delay the investigation.

In the event the Bilingual Unit is requested for out-of-jurisdiction assistance, the Bilingual Unit member receiving the request shall utilize his chain of command to obtain the Watch Commander's permission to comply with the request.

**330.00 OFF DUTY CALL OUT**

If a request for assistance occurs and no on-duty Bilingual Unit members are available for assistance, the Communications Unit will contact the on-call Bilingual Unit Supervisor for possible off-duty call out of a Unit member.

The on-call Bilingual Unit Supervisor shall evaluate the situation, determine if an off-duty Unit member should be activated, and if so, notify the member of the assignment. Communications will then be notified of the member's activation.

1. If a Bilingual Unit member who is on-call will not be available for call-out status for whatever reason, he/she MUST contact his/her Bilingual Unit Supervisor and notify them.
2. An on-call Bilingual Unit member MUST make contact with the supervisor initiating a call-out as soon as possible and within reasonable time once they receive notification by phone call, text, e-mail, in person or by any other means.
3. An on-call Bilingual Unit member MUST respond to the call-out within reasonable time (usually 45min) from the time they are instructed to respond by the Bilingual Unit supervisor initiating the call-out unless they have previously notified and obtained approval by their Bilingual Unit supervisor not to respond.
4. Any second violation of this procedure can/will result in the removal of the Bilingual Unit member from the Bilingual Unit and no longer receive monetary compensation for their language skill.

**340.00 INVESTIGATIONS INTERPRETATION**

Any member of the Investigations Unit or any other unit needing an interpreter should contact the Full-Time Bilingual Unit Coordinator to schedule the interview. Investigations personnel should make every effort to schedule interviews ahead of time and during the Full-Time Bilingual Unit Coordinator's normal business hours.

In the event a Bilingual Unit member is needed outside normal working hours, officers should adhere to the protocol in 330.00.

**400.00 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

The goals of the Oklahoma City Police Department's Bilingual Unit are to assist the Department to perform its mission and deliver its services in situations where languages other than spoken English are used. It is our goal to complete this task in the most efficient and effective manner possible. In doing so, we will commit ourselves to excellence and discharge our responsibilities professionally and courteously while making maximum utilization of available resources.

The Bilingual Unit will strive to keep abreast of the newest, latest and most up to date technology and information in order to maintain a well-trained and diverse unit with the ability to respond to the most demanding situations that arise within the community.

**410.00 PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

The performance of the Bilingual Unit will be measured by Performance Measures as established in the Department's Leading for Results (LFR) program. These measures will be reported as both Demands and Outputs in the LFR Program.

**500.00 PERSONNEL DUTIES, AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**510.00 BILINGUAL UNIT SUPERVISOR**

The Bilingual Unit Supervisor's duties will include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Directs the day-to-day operation of the Bilingual Unit;
2. Serves as coordinator and scheduler of assignments;
3. Acts as the Department's liaison, when needed, to second-language communities and individuals;
4. Plans Bilingual Unit assignments in cooperation with other agencies;
5. Collects and maintains information on assignments;
6. Reviews logs and reports for accuracy and completeness;
7. Assembles statistics on Bilingual Unit activity;

8. Maintains an inventory for Bilingual Unit.
9. Coordinates activities of the Bilingual Unit Lieutenants.

## **520.00 BILINGUAL UNIT LIEUTENANTS**

Team Leaders (Lieutenants) will perform the following duties:

1. Provide supervision of Bilingual Unit members when on a Bilingual Unit assignment;
2. Assist the Bilingual Unit Supervisor as needed;
3. Assist with the training of Bilingual Unit Members;
4. Collect appropriate documentation and reports.
5. Lieutenants within the Bilingual Unit shall be assigned a team comprised of Bilingual Unit members. Each team will be on a monthly call out rotation that is subject to deployment into the field if a situation warrants it.
6. The Communications Unit will first determine whether an on-duty Bilingual Unit Member is available prior to contacting the Bilingual Unit Lieutenant on rotation. The Bilingual Unit Lieutenant will then determine if call out is justified, and notify team members who are on call.

## **530.00 FULL-TIME BILINGUAL UNIT COORDINATOR**

The Chief of Police shall appoint one member to be the Full-Time Bilingual Unit Coordinator.

This officer, in coordination with the Unit Supervisor, shall be responsible for the scheduled training agendas as well as any scheduled linguistic or cultural training schools.

The Full-Time Bilingual Unit Coordinator in coordination with the Bilingual Unit Supervisor, will be responsible for recommending and conducting testing as needed for the purpose of re-establishing or upgrading a team member's fluency rating.

The Full-Time Bilingual Unit Coordinator will have the following duties:

1. Maintains all records within the Bilingual unit such as monthly training, testing, training attendance, activity, and member qualifications.

2. Enters and tracks monthly activity of Bilingual Unit members.
3. Tracks the contacts with LEP (limited English proficiency) individuals by the Oklahoma City Police Department
4. Completes monthly on-call rosters of Bilingual officers and distributes to dispatch and other appropriate personnel.
5. Develops and implements training to all employees on providing services to LEP individuals.
6. Develops training curriculum to teach other untrained personnel who are interested in learning a second language.
7. Be available Monday through Friday during business hours for Spanish interpretations/translations for investigators and other officers in need of this service.
8. Schedules interpreters as requested by investigators and other officers as needed.
9. Assesses and revises the Bilingual SOP's and Policy and Procedures related to LEP when needed.
10. Conducts outreach and develops open lines of communication with the LEP community.
11. Develops resources with other organizations outside the Department to improve Department capabilities.
12. Maintains all translated Department forms and have translated as needed.
13. Assesses the Department LEP signage and change as needed.
14. Tracks the ethnic census makeup of Oklahoma City to adjust the language services to be provided.
15. Develops and maintains the LEP web pages on Department website.
16. Has a flexible schedule to work occasional evenings and weekends

Bilingual Unit members must maintain a certain level of minimum fluency determined by the Bilingual Unit Supervisor to remain on the Bilingual Unit. If this fluency cannot be maintained then consideration for removal from the Bilingual Unit shall be recommended.

**550.00 BILINGUAL UNIT MEMBERS**

Bilingual Unit members' duties will include, but not be limited to:

1. Perform all the tasks assigned to him/her, and successfully completes the assignment. This includes responding to on and off-duty callouts;
2. Complete any necessary reports;
  - a. Supplemental narrative reports shall be made in all interpretations where a Bilingual Unit member assists a detective in a formal interview.
3. Keep a running log of Bilingual Unit activity performed by that officer;
4. Continue to strive to increase his skill level and the skill levels of his fellow Unit members.

**600.00 PERSONNEL SELECTION PROCEDURES**

The Oklahoma City Police Department Bilingual Unit is a voluntary unit and the duties of the officers on the Bilingual Unit are in addition to the officer's regular assignments. Applicants who wish to be considered for duty on the Bilingual Unit must meet the following requirements and go through the following procedures. Additionally, all current and future members of the Bilingual Unit must sign and acknowledge the required duties and expectations of the Bilingual Unit specified in the Bilingual Unit Commitment Letter. All current and future members of the Bilingual Unit will be held to the specified standards in the Bilingual Unit Commitment Letter. Members who are unwilling or unable to meet those standards will be removed from the Bilingual Unit and forfeit future Bilingual Incentive Pay.

**610.00 BILINGUAL UNIT SUPERVISOR**

The Chief of Police, or his designee, selects the Supervisor of the Bilingual Unit. The selection is made based on work experience, interpersonal skills and general reputation as a manager. Second language competence, while valued, is not a requirement.

**620.00 BILINGUAL UNIT LIEUTENANTS**

The Bilingual Unit Supervisor, after consultation with the Unit's chain of command and existing Bilingual Unit lieutenants, shall select appropriate lieutenants to serve as Team leaders and co-supervisors. Second language competence, while valued, is not a requirement.

**630.00 BILINGUAL UNIT MEMBERS**

1. Must be in good standing with the Department;
2. Cannot be on any kind of disciplinary probation;
3. Provide documentation of special training, skills or experience;
4. Submit request to Bilingual Unit Command via divisional chain of command; and
5. Upon approval of Division Supervisor and Bilingual Unit Command, the Division Bilingual Unit Lieutenant will select potential Bilingual Unit members to be given the ACTFL-OPI or SIIPI test.

Successful applicants who attain an Intermediate or above score on the ACTFL OPI or SLIPI test will be admitted as probationary members to the Bilingual Unit for the period of one year.

After the completion of one year of successful performance on the Bilingual Unit, the officer will be given full, non-probationary status.

**640.00 FULL TIME BILINGUAL UNIT COORDINATOR**

The Full-Time Bilingual Unit Coordinator will be selected by the Chief of Police. This position will be within the Investigations Bureau. The Full-Time Bilingual Unit Coordinator will work Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm, but may have to adjust their schedule to meet job demands. Preference will be given to applicants with certified language skills. Candidates for this position should not be under disciplinary action or probation.

**650.00 ROLE OF BILINGUAL UNIT MEMBERS**

Bilingual Unit members must keep in mind their role as an interpreter when conducting formal interviews. While interpreting, Bilingual Unit members must understand and adhere to their role as interpreters without deviating into a role as a counselor, legal advisor, or other roles, with the purpose of protecting the integrity of the case.

If the Bilingual Unit member is the assigned investigator/officer on a case involving an LEP individual, they will notify the LEP individual of their dual role as assigned investigator/officer and interpreter.

**660.00 INTERVIEWS AND INTERROGATIONS**

When assisting in an investigation, members of the Bilingual Unit will adhere to the following Policies and Procedures:

#### **139.50 FORMAL INTERVIEWS**

The accuracy of victim and witness statements is essential in investigations. To ensure effective communication and accuracy, a Bilingual Unit member or other qualified interpreter shall be used when taking formal statements or conducting any formal interview of a LEP victim and/or witness.

Written forms shall be provided to the victim and/or witness in his/her primary language, when available. If the forms have not been translated into the LEP individual's primary language, or in the case of illiteracy, forms shall be read to the witness and/or victim in his/her primary language by a qualified interpreter. While in a police facility, interviews of LEP individuals shall be recorded. When available, interviews conducted in the field should be recorded.

If the officer/investigator believes there is any conflict of interest with the assigned interpreter, bias, or any other reason why the interpreter should be recused, the officer/investigator shall consult with a supervisor to determine if the use of another interpreter is warranted.

#### **139.55 INTERROGATIONS**

Only a Bilingual Unit member or qualified interpreter shall be used in any interrogation as the suspect's legal rights could be adversely impacted.

The Miranda admonition and all other written forms shall be provided to the suspect in his/her primary language when available. If the forms have not been translated into the LEP individual's primary language or in the case of illiteracy, forms shall be read to the suspect in his/her primary language by a qualified interpreter. While in a police facility, interrogations of LEP individuals shall be recorded. When available, interrogations conducted in the field should be recorded.

If the officer/investigator believes that there is any conflict of interest with the assigned interpreter, bias, or any other reason why the interpreter should be recused, the officer/investigator shall consult with a supervisor to determine if the use of another interpreter is warranted.

### **700.00 TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT**

The Bilingual Unit will provide training, as needed, to Bilingual Unit members and other departmental employees.

Training shall be provided for several reasons:

1. To ensure that Unit members' skills do not deteriorate over time;
2. To raise the skill level of Unit members;
3. To introduce other departmental employees to linguistic and cultural issues;
4. To train other departmental officers to become qualified as Bilingual Unit members.

**710.00 TRAINING**

The Bilingual Unit members shall train the first Wednesday of February, May, August and November. This continual training is to increase and maintain skills consistent with the unit and department mission. Training is required in order to create a highly specialized Unit capable of performing with precision in all situations. All Bilingual Unit members are required to attend at least two (2) training sessions (8hrs per year) unless their absence is approved by appropriate authority. Failure to attend 2 or more training sessions within a year, without a valid excuse, will result in removal from the Bilingual Unit and forfeit Bilingual Unit Incentive Pay.

**720.00 ACADEMY TRAINING**

Each academy recruit class is taught, both cultural awareness and Spanish. Members of the Bilingual Unit may be tasked to assist in providing instruction in both these areas.

**800.00 UNIT INSPECTION**

The Bilingual Unit will cooperate with the Staff Inspections Unit, when they perform inspections of the Unit. The purpose of the Staff Inspection is to compare the Department's formal expectations with the actual performance of the Unit.

**900.00 RECORDS MANAGEMENT AND SPECIAL REPORTING**

When a Bilingual Unit Member uses his language skill to interpret for another officer, he/she will ensure that his/her participation and the information interpreted are recorded in a police report, if necessary. This report may be either the initial officer's report, or a supplemental report filed by the Bilingual Unit member. All completed supplemental reports will be reviewed and then processed into the Records Unit.

**910.00 TRAINING RECORDS**

Training records will be completed and maintained by the Training Director. Copies will be provided to the Training Center for CLEET credit whenever possible.

**920.00 RECORDS RETENTION**

The Bilingual Unit will adhere to Oklahoma State Statutes and the Record's Retention Policy of the City of Oklahoma City regarding records retention.

**1000.00 COLLECTIONS AND PRESERVATION OF EVIDENCE**

Bilingual Unit members may locate property or evidence during the course of their duties. During such situations, members will document the recovery of such item, preserve and/or collect it, and submit it per applicable procedure. A report will be made.

**1100.00 EQUIPMENT/VEHICLE OPERATION AND CONTROL**

The Oklahoma City Police Department Bilingual Unit utilizes a wide variety of specialized equipment in order to perform its interpreting, training and public relations duties. Property management includes the care and maintenance of existing equipment, accurate record keeping, and the procurement of new equipment that updates and replaces current equipment that is no longer serviceable.

## **APPENDIX A - GLOSSARY**

Oklahoma City Bilingual Unit officers use the following terms in their course of their duties. Knowledge of these concepts is very valuable to any employee wishing to make use of Bilingual Unit members' abilities, or to further their own understanding of second language and cultural issues.

### **ACTFL**

American Council of Teachers of Foreign Language. This national organization has developed objective, standardized tests of spoken languages, the ACTFL tests. It is this test that the Department uses to determine the skill level of Bilingual Unit members. Each Bilingual Unit member is labeled with their ACTFL OPI score, which is an excellent description and ranking of their ability to speak and understand their target language. Detectives and other individuals needing formal or complex interviews performed should attempt to use a Bilingual Unit member with an Advanced or Superior ACTFL score.

### **ACTFL OPI**

The ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview is the specific tool the Department uses to test Bilingual Unit members. It tests oral conversational ability only, with no reading, writing, or specific vocabulary required.

### **ADVANCED LEVEL**

This is the next-to-highest level of proficiency on the ACTFL scale. Speakers at this level do not speak or understand as well as a native speaker, but have a high level of ability nonetheless.

### **AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE (ASL)**

ASL, is a recognized foreign language used by many deaf individuals, especially those who

are culturally deaf. It has a separate grammatical structure that closely follows the French language. It will be difficult to write using English to a deaf individual who uses ASL to communicate.

ASL is not based on English, but is a separate language with its own grammar, usage and idioms. It is not a universal language, but is specific to people living in North America. Not every deaf person speaks ASL. All Bilingual Unit Sign Language members speak some level of ASL

### **BILINGUAL UNIT MEMBER**

Any approved and designated member of the Oklahoma City Police Department's Bilingual Unit who demonstrates a tested proficiency in a second language(s) other than English.

### **CERTIFIED**

While it is common for people to speak of Certified Interpreters, there are actually very few certifying agencies in the USA. In Oklahoma, only Medical Interpreters and ASL Interpreters can become certified. All other agencies and industries, such as government, education and law enforcement, develop their own in-house standards for second language use. It is incorrect to call any of these individuals, including any police officer, a 'certified' interpreter, unless they have gone through Medical Interpreting or ASL Interpreting Certifying process.

### **CONSECUTIVE INTERPRETING**

Consecutive Interpreting refers to the stop-and-go pattern used in many interpreting situations. A speaker will speak a short sentence or two, then pause, and the interpreter will speak, interpreting the words of the speaker. This is a higher level of interpreting than Summary Interpretation, but lower than Simultaneous Interpreting.

When using Consecutive Interpreting, Departmental employees can greatly assist Bilingual Unit members by speaking in short, choppy sentences, thus allowing the interpreter to interpret short ideas rather than long, complicated ones.

### **CULTURAL BROKER**

Communication involves not just language, but also an understanding of the cultural assumptions of both involved parties. Members of the Bilingual Unit are expected to act not just as interpreters, but also as Cultural Brokers, assisting parties on both sides to clearly

and fully understand any miscommunications or misunderstandings due to cultural differences.

Officers using Bilingual Unit members are encouraged to ask the Interpreter if there are any cultural issues that might be helping or hindering the transmission of their messages.

### **DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING INDIVIDUAL**

An individual with any degree of hearing loss that has an impact on their activities of daily living or requires special assistance or reasonable accommodation.

### **DOMINANT LANGUAGE**

Regardless of an individual's native country, family history or language history, they will have evolved a Dominant Language, the language they are most comfortable in. When communication is of great importance the individual's Dominant Language should be used. Determining a bilingual individual's Dominant Language can be difficult, and assumptions should not be based purely on the individual's native language or home language.

Miranda warnings and any statements obtained after a Miranda warning should always be obtained in the suspect's Dominant Language. Specific and focused questions should be asked of the suspect to determine his Dominant Language, if the subsequent questioning is to be accepted in court.

### **DEPARTMENT OF REHABILATATIVE SERVICES**

The Oklahoma DRS is the agency that oversees Deaf and Sign Language Issues. Their agency tests and certifies ASL speakers, using the QUAST and SLIPI tests.

### **EXIGENT CIRCUMSTANCES**

Situations requiring deviation from procedures such as immediate threat to life, safety, property, a fleeing suspect, the potential loss or destruction of evidence.

### **ETHNICITY**

A person's Ethnicity is fundamentally different from a person's Race. (See Race). While a Race is generally describes someone's earliest geographical and genetic origins (the continent of their distant ancestors,) their Ethnicity refers to which culture or group the person and their relatives have traditionally joined and identified with. Examples of Ethnicities include Hispanic, Cajun, Arapaho or Cherokee.

For example, Native Americans who settled in Northern Canada might consider themselves Eskimos (Race, Native American; Ethnicity, Eskimo) whereas Native Americans who settled in Central America might consider themselves Hispanics (Race, Native American; Ethnicity, Hispanic.) A branch of the same Native Americans who settled in eastern Colorado and Wyoming might consider themselves Arapaho (Race, Native American; Ethnicity, Arapaho.)

Europeans (Race, White) who settled in Central America might consider themselves Hispanic (Race, White; Ethnicity, Hispanic) whereas Europeans from the same period who settled in Louisiana might consider themselves Cajun (Race, White; Ethnicity, Cajun.)

A person's language, community and culture are often the best indications of their Ethnicity.

## **FLUENCY**

Describing a speaker as 'fluent' or 'being fluent in a language' is common but misleading, as it is an inexact and undefined term. The Department uses the ACTFL-OPI and SLIPI scores to more correctly and exactly define an officer's skill level.

## **GENERAL CONTACTS**

Only those interactions with LEP individuals that are both informal and non-confrontational in nature, such as giving directions.

## **GIST**

Many people who are not fully competent in a language can still understand portions of the language. This is called 'getting the gist' or 'understanding the gist' of the language. Individuals who feel they can understand the gist of what was said often miss many crucial words and ideas that can greatly alter meaning.

Officers should remember that it is an inaccurate and unreliable method of understanding, and little weight should be given to statement information obtained at this level.

## **HERITAGE SPEAKER**

A Heritage Speaker is an individual who was raised in a family environment where a second language was spoken, as opposed to a Native Speaker, who grew up in the country of that language. Many Bilingual Unit members are Heritage Speakers. These individuals can have a strong, natural understanding of the language, but also could incorporate many

errors in their speaking due to their lack of time in the native country.

The Department does not depend on Heritage Speakers to perform written translations, as a written translation needs the skill level of a Native Speaker.

## **HISPANIC**

Hispanic is the most common term to describe someone of Hispanic Ethnicity. It is preferred, and is far more precise, than ‘Spanish,’ ‘Mexican.’ Latino is also used with equal correctness.

## **IDIOM**

An idiom is a phrase made up of words that do not actually describe the phrase’s meaning. “What’s up?” “I’m beat” and “Clear as a bell” are all examples of idioms, none of which are clear when translated word for word. Officers are encouraged to avoid the use of idioms when using Bilingual Unit members, as idioms are notoriously difficult to interpret.

## **INTERMEDIATE**

The middle level of the ACTFL-OPI is the Intermediate level, and is the entry level for Bilingual Unit membership. Speakers at this level are more advanced than beginning, or Novice, speakers, but still struggle with the language. They can generally make themselves clear, but cannot interpret or understand complicated or subtle ideas.

## **INTERPRETATION**

The act of listening/viewing a communication in one language (source language) and converting it to another language (target language) while retaining the same meaning.

## **INTERPRETER**

In spoken languages, this is a general term and can be applied to people speaking at many levels. In the Deaf Community, however, this is a legally defined specific term that implies the Interpreter is a QAST Certified, neutral, third party interpreter, not a Bilingual Unit member who speaks ASL.

## **LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (LEP)**

Individuals whose primary language is not English and have a limited ability to read, write,

speak or understand the English language.

## **LATINO**

Another term used in conjunction with Hispanic, although Latino is sometimes a more politically laden term.

## **NATIVE SPEAKER**

A Native Speaker spent the majority of his childhood, and a majority of his early education, in a country that spoke his native language. This contrasts with a Heritage Speaker, who learned his second language in a home or neighborhood environment, but outside of a country that spoke his home language.

## **NATIONALITY**

Nationality refers to the legal permanent residence of an individual, rather than to their race, ethnicity or which language they speak.

‘Spanish,’ when used correctly, is a term of nationality that describes a person from Spain. When used incorrectly, a ‘Spanish’ person most likely should be described more correctly as ‘Hispanic.’

Likewise, officers should not assume and label a Spanish-speaker’s nationality as ‘Mexican’ unless it has been discovered that the person’s country of origin is truly Mexico instead of another Spanish-speaking country. Many Hispanics in the Oklahoma City area have a nationality of a country other than Mexico, such as Guatemalan, Columbian or Honduran.

## **NOVICE**

A Novice is the lowest of the ACTFL skill levels, and describes a low-functioning individual.

## **PRIMARY LANGUAGE**

The language in which an individual is most effectively able to communicate.

## **QAST**

The QAST test (Quality Assurance Screening Test) is the test the Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitative Services administers to professional ASL Interpreters. It is a high-level,

very rigorous test. The Department uses the DRS SLIPI test instead.

### **QUALIFIED INTERPRETER**

A member of the Bilingual Unit or a language line interpreter.

### **QUALIFIED INTERPRETER FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING**

Any interpreter certified as defined in Oklahoma State Statute 63-2408.

### **RACE**

Race is a distinctly different concept than Ethnicity (See Ethnicity.) Race generally refers to a person's ancestors' continent or area of origin.

The Federal Government recognizes five landmasses as originating five Races: the Americas, Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Pacific Islands.

In general, therefore, if a person's ancestors came from the American continent they would be classified as Native American. If their ancestors came from Europe, they would be described as White, or if from Africa, Black or African American. If a person's ancestors came from the Asian continent (including India and the Arab countries) they would be described as Asian, or if from the Pacific Islands they would be described as a Pacific Islanders.

Therefore, there are five Races defined and used by the Federal government: White, Black or African American, American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian, and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander. The letter abbreviations are usually W, B, I, A, O.

Hispanic, Mexican, Arabic, Cherokee, Irish, or Vietnamese are not examples of races, they are Ethnicities and Nationalities. Bilingual Unit members should accurately describe individuals by using all three categories: Race, Ethnicity and Nationality.

### **SIGNED EXACT ENGLISH (S.E.E.)**

Is one form of Sign Language that is used primarily by deaf children. It follows English grammar and signs word for word including tense and suffix. It is NOT often used or understood by deaf adults especially those who are culturally deaf from birth.

### **SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETATION**

Simultaneous Interpreting is the highest level of interpreting. In this method, the Interpreter

speaks at nearly the same time as the speaker; interpreting his words at the same rate they are spoken.

### **SLANG**

Slang is a non-standard usage of words. In general, slang is difficult to interpret and should be avoided when using a Bilingual Unit member.

### **SLIPI**

The SLIPI test is the test the Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitative Services administers to any level of ASL speakers. The Department uses the test as the standard.

### **SPANGLISH**

Spanglish refers to a mix of Spanish and English, the normal result of speaking one language in the presence of the other. Spanglish is, in general, a slang language and thus should be understood by Bilingual Unit Spanish speakers, but generally not spoken by them.

It should also be remembered that Spanglish is generally only picked up by Spanish speakers who have spent some time in the US. Newly arrived immigrants are generally very unfamiliar with any Spanglish, and again, Bilingual Unit members should avoid its use with them.

### **SUMMARY INTERPRETATION**

Summary Interpretation occurs when an interpreter listens to a speaker, and then summarizes what was said as he interprets, as opposed to more accurate consecutive interpretation. This method of interpretation is by far the most common, and can be useful, if the speakers understand that their whole meaning is not getting through; only a summary is being interpreted, with many details and ideas left out. An officer needing a formal statement from a suspect or witness should not rely upon summary interpreting.

### **SUPERIOR**

Superior is the highest of the four ACTFL levels. It implies the speaker could speak at an educated native's level.

### **TRANSLATION**

The replacement of written text from one language (source language) into an equivalent

written text of another language (target language), while retaining the same meaning.

### **WORD FOR WORD INTERPRETING**

Word for Word interpreting is an incorrect method that is sometimes asked of Bilingual Unit members. No two languages can literally be interpreted word for word, so Word for Word interpreting is fundamentally impossible. Bilingual Unit members should not be asked to attempt to perform Word for Word interpretations. Instead, if the exactly precise meaning of a statement is critically important, that importance should be communicated to the Bilingual Unit member so that the utmost care in interpreting can be taken.

### **WORKING IN A LANGUAGE**

Interpreting and Translating generally refer to an individual being a third-party intermediary and assisting two parties who do not understand each other's language. However, people who speak a second language often use their second language skill at work to perform their own job, or to assist coworkers with their jobs. This function is called Working In a Language, rather than Interpreting that language. Many employees are hired specifically for their ability to perform their jobs in more than one language.

Therefore, a Spanish-speaking Bilingual Unit officer may speak directly with a Spanish-speaking crime witness to obtain a statement without considering this to be an Interpreting assignment. Instead, that Bilingual Unit officer is merely working in his second language. Likewise, he could share interviewing duties with coworkers, performing Spanish language interviews and sharing the results of those interviews with the rest of the investigative team, just as other investigators perform English language interviews and share those results with him.

**Investigations Bureau  
Deputy Chief**

**Oklahoma City Police Department  
Investigations Bureau  
Standard Operation Procedures  
Effective: February 6, 2006**

**Bilingual Unit**

**420.0270**

Bilingual Unit  
Bilingual Coordinator

TO: All Bilingual Unit Members

**Oklahoma City Police Department  
Investigations Bureau  
Standard Operation Procedures  
Effective: February 6, 2006**

**Bilingual Unit**

**420.0270**

FROM: Juan A. Balderrama, Lieutenant  
Bilingual Unit Supervisor

DATE: September 23, 2014

SUBJECT: Acknowledgement of Duties and Expectations of Bilingual Unit Members

The following is a list of expectations and duties of all Bilingual Unit members. Read the list carefully and sign the bottom of the form acknowledging you have received and understand the expectations and duties of all members of the Bilingual Unit.

- As a member of the Bilingual Unit, you are considered to be on on-call status 24 hours a day during your assigned team's scheduled months.
- Your Bilingual Unit Supervisor must be notified if you will be outside the greater metropolitan area or incapable of responding for any reason.
- You are responsible for answering your telephone during your assigned on-call months.
- You are required to provide the Bilingual Unit Coordinator with monthly activity if not part of the Patrol Division where LEP calls are tracked.
- While on duty, you are required to respond and assist with Bilingual Unit Calls or any requests for Bilingual Unit assistance.
- You may be requested to participate in public demonstrations or public relations functions involving public speaking.
- Absent an emergency or prescheduled time off, you will be expected to attend two out of the four Bilingual Unit Quarterly training sessions during the calendar year.
- Failure to participate, respond to call outs or willful neglect of any of the Bilingual Unit responsibilities can and will result in your dismissal from the unit and the forfeit of Bilingual Unit incentive pay.

I have read the above and understand these are obligations expected of me as a member of the Bilingual Unit.

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Print Name

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Signature